

REMARKS

These remarks are in response to the Office Action dated April 4, 2003, which has a shortened statutory period for response set to expire July 4, 2003. A one-month extension, to expire August 4, 2003, is requested in a petition filed herewith.

Specification

The specification is amended to correct minor typographical errors. No new matter is added.

Claims

Claims 1-42 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1, 2, 7-9, 13, 20, 22, and 23 are rejected over prior art. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 14, 20, 22, 25, 26, and 28 are amended. Claims 3, 10, 21, 23, and 24 are canceled. Claims 2, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15-19, 27, and 29-42 remain as filed. Reconsideration is requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 1, 2, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Desmarais (5,168,894). Claims 7, 8, 9, 13, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desmarais in view of Elsea (3,653,590).

Claims 1-6

Claim 1 is amended herein to include the limitations of dependent Claim 3, which is indicated to be allowable by the Examiner. Original Claim 3 is canceled. Original Claims 4 and 5 are amended to depend from amended Claim 1.

Claims 2, and 4-6 now depend either directly or indirectly from Claim 1 and are therefore distinguished from the cited prior art for at least the reason provided above with respect to Claim 1.

Claims 7-13:

Claim 7 is amended herein to include the limitations of original base Claim 1 and the limitations of Claim 10, which is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter.

However, so as not to unintentionally mislead the Examiner, Applicants wish to point out that amended Claim 7 does not include the limitations of intervening Claims 8-9. Upon review of Claims 7-10, it does not appear that the limitations of Claims 8-9 are necessary to define over the cited prior art. Claims 9 and 11 are amended to depend from Claim 7, and Claim 10 is cancelled.

Claims 8-9 and 11-13 depend either directly or indirectly from amended Claim 7 and are therefore distinguished from the cited prior art for at least the reasons provided above with respect to Claim 7.

Claims 14-19:

Claim 14 is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter, and is amended herein to include the limitations of original base Claim 1. Claims 15-19 depend either directly or indirectly from Claim 14 and are therefore distinguished from the cited prior art for at least the reason provided with respect to Claim 14.

Claims 20-21:

Claim 20 is amended to include the limitations of dependent Claim 21, which is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter. Claim 21 is canceled.

Claims 22-25:

Claim 22 is amended to include the limitations of original base Claim 20 and the limitations of dependent claims 23 and 24. Claim 24 is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter. Claim 25 is amended to depend from new Claim 22 and is allowable for at least the reason given above with respect to Claim 22. Original Claims 23-24 are canceled.

Claims 26-27:

Claim 26 is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter, and is amended herein to include the limitations of original base Claim 20. Claim 27 depends from Claim 26 and is therefore distinguished from the cited prior art for at least the reason provided with respect to Claim 26.

Claims 28-33:

Claim 28 is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter, and is amended herein to include the limitations of original base Claim 20. Claims 29-33 depend either directly or indirectly from Claim 28 and are therefore distinguished from the cited prior art for at least the reason provided with respect to Claim 28.

For the above reasons Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe Claims 1-2, 4-9, 11-20, 22, and 25-42 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner undertake any action other than allowance of Claims 1-2, 4-9, 11-20, 22, and 25-42, or if the Examiner has any questions or suggestions for expediting the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' attorney at (269) 279-8820.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 8/4/03

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR 1.8(A))

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: 8/4/03

Larry E. Henneman, Jr.
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